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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LJUBLJANA 000636

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
DEPT FOR EUR/NCE
E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [SI](#)
SUBJECT: SLOVENIA: RESIGNATIONS AND REALIGNMENTS IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

REF: A. LJUBLJANA 623

- [B](#). LJUBLJANA 600
- [C](#). LJUBLJANA 597
- [D](#). LJUBLJANA 547
- [E](#). LJUBLJANA 634

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE PROTECT ACCORDINGLY.

[1](#). (U) SUMMARY: OVER THE COURSE OF THE LAST WEEK, THE SLOVENIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS SEEN A NUMBER OF CHANGES. THE FORMER FOMIN DIMITRIJ RUPEL, WHO WAS DISMISSED ON 05 JULY (REFS A, B, C AND E), HAS ALIGNED HIMSELF WITH THE OPPOSITION DEPUTY GROUP SLOVENIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDS), WHICH HAS NOMINATED HIM FOR THE POST OF DEPUTY SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT BORUT PAHOR, OF UNITED LIST (ZLSD), RESIGNED HIS POSITION ON 07 JULY IN ORDER TO TAKE HIS SEAT IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (EP). IN ADDITION TO PAHOR, THREE MORE MPS ARE SET TO RESIGN TO TAKE THEIR SEATS IN THE EP. END SUMMARY.

RUPEL ALIGNS WITH OPPOSITION

[2](#). (U) IN THE SAME WEEK THAT HE WAS DISMISSED AS FOMIN BY PARLIAMENT AND LEFT THE RULING LDS (REFS A, B, C AND E), DIMITRIJ RUPEL HAS ALIGNED WITH THE OPPOSITION SLOVENIAN DEMOCRATS (SDS) WITHOUT FORMALLY JOINING THE PARTY. SDS PRESIDENT AND FELLOW MP JANEZ JANSKA STATED AT A PRESS CONFERENCE THAT SDS HAS WORKED WELL WITH RUPEL "MOST OF THE TIME," AND THAT "WE THINK THAT WE CAN COOPERATE WELL ALSO IN THE FUTURE." [NOTE: COM AND DCM MET WITH RUPEL ON 08 JULY. PLEASE REFER TO REF E FOR MORE DETAILS. END NOTE.]

PARLIAMENT'S LEADERSHIP TO TAKE NEW SHAPE

[3](#). (U) THE PRESIDENT OF THE SLOVENIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BORUT PAHOR RESIGNED HIS POST ON 07 JULY TO GIVE HIS UNITED LIST (ZLSD) COLLEAGUES AND OTHER MPS AMPLE TIME TO ELECT A NEW PRESIDENT. PAHOR WON A SEAT IN LAST MONTH'S EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY (EP) ELECTIONS. SINCE THE POSTS OF MEP AND MP CANNOT BE OCCUPIED AT THE SAME TIME, PAHOR'S TERM IN OFFICE AS PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENT WOULD HAVE ENDED WHEN HE JOINED THE EP LATER THIS MONTH. PAHOR HAS HELD THE PRESIDENT'S CHAIR SINCE NOVEMBER 2000. DURING HIS TERM, HE HAS HELPED GUIDE THE PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES AND LEGISLATION WHICH ENABLED EU AND NATO ACCESSION. PAHOR AND HIS PARTY HAVE NOMINATED ZLSD MP FERI HORVAT AS NEW PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. [NOTE: ACCORDING TO THE COALITION AGREEMENT, ZLSD HAS THE RIGHT TO THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT OF PARLIAMENT.] ALTHOUGH NATIONAL ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD IN THE FALL, THE NEW PRESIDENT WILL HAVE THE DEMANDING TASK OF PREPARING THE FIRST SESSION OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT. THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BECOMES PRESIDENT OF SLOVENIA IF THE INCUMBENT BECOMES INCAPACITATED, RESIGNS, OR DIES. THE VOTE FOR THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IS SCHEDULED FOR 12 JULY, BY SECRET BALLOT. ELECTION REQUIRES AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY (46) OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS, AND MOST BELIEVE HORVAT WILL BE APPROVED.

RUPEL AS DEPUTY SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT?

[4](#). (U) ALTHOUGH RUPEL IS NOT AN OFFICIAL MEMBER OF SDS, THE PARTY ANNOUNCED ON 07 JULY THAT IT WOULD PROPOSE RUPEL FOR THE POST OF DEPUTY SPEAKER AFTER THE CURRENT HOLDER OF THE POSITION, SDS MP MIHA BREJC, RESIGNED ON 08 JULY TO BE AN MEP. [NOTE: UNDER THE PARLIAMENTARY RULES OF PROCEDURE, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS UP TO THREE DEPUTY SPEAKERS, ONE OF WHOM IS A MEMBER OF THE LARGEST OPPOSITION PARLIAMENTARY FACTION, I.E. SDS. END NOTE.] LDS, THE GOVERNING COALITION PARTY THAT RUPEL LEFT THIS WEEK, HAS YET TO COMMENT ON RUPEL'S NOMINATION SAYING THAT THEY WILL WAIT UNTIL IT BECOMES "OFFICIAL" FOLLOWING PROPER, PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE. ZLSD HAS STATED THAT IT SEES RUPEL'S NOMINATION AS "A REWARD FOR RUPEL'S POLITICAL TRANSFER" AND WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO KEEP RUPEL FROM THE POSITION. THE SLOVENIAN NATIONALIST PARTY (SNS) STATED THAT IT WOULD NOT SUPPORT RUPEL WHILE NEW SLOVENIA (NSI) HAS STATED THAT IT WOULD SUPPORT HIM. THE PENSIONER'S PARTY (DESUS) AND THE

PEOPLE'S PARTY (SLS) HAVE YET TO GIVE A POSITION PUBLICLY.
[COMMENT: SINCE DESUS IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING
COALITION, ONE CAN IMAGINE THAT IT WOULD ALSO VOTE AGAINST
RUPEL. END COMMENT]. RUPEL WILL ALSO HAVE TO OBTAIN

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GIVEN THE GREAT RESISTANCE
TO HIS CANDIDACY, HIS SUCCESS IS CONSIDERABLY LESS CERTAIN
THAN HORVAT'S.

TWO MORE MPS RESIGN, REPLACEMENTS HAVE BEEN DETERMINED

15. (U) IN ADDITION TO PAHOR AND BREJC, MPS JELKO KACIN
(SDS) AND LOJZE PETERLE OF NEW SLOVENIA (NSI) MUST RESIGN IN
ORDER TO TAKE THEIR SEATS IN THE EP. ALL FOUR MPS ARE VERY
INFLUENTIAL IN THEIR PARTIES, IN THE SLOVENIAN POLITICAL
SYSTEM, AND IN PARLIAMENT. HOWEVER, SINCE THEY WILL ONLY
MISS THE SESSION NEEDED TO OFFICIALLY REPLACE THEM, THERE IS
LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT THEIR ABSENCES WILL HAVE MUCH EFFECT
ON THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS BEFORE THE FALL ELECTIONS.

THE REPLACEMENTS

16. (U) THE FOLLOWING ARE SHORT BIOGRAPHIES FOR FERI HORVAT,
NOMINATED FOR PRESIDENT OF PARLIAMENT, AND FOR THE FOUR MPS
REPLACING THOSE WHO WON SEATS IN THE EP.

--FERI HORVAT HAS BEEN AN ZLSD MP IN THE SLOVENIAN NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY SINCE 1992. PRIOR TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, HE WAS
THE GENERAL MANAGER OF RADENSKA, A THERMAL WATER COMPANY; A
MEMBER OF THE MANAGING BOARD OF LJUBLJANSKA BANKA; AND WAS A
MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA IN CHARGE
OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND TOURISM. HE HAS A
BA IN ECONOMICS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA AND IS 62
YEARS OLD.

-- BREDI PECAN (ZLSD) IS THE MAYOR OF DOMZALE AND IMPORTANT
MEMBER OF THE ZLSD WOMAN'S FORUM. PECAN WILL FILL PAHOR'S
SEAT.

-- DARJA LAVTIZAR BEBLER IS THE FORMER SLOVENIAN AMBASSADOR
TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE IN STRASBURG AND A MEMBER OF LDS.
SHE WAS AN LDS MP FROM 1992 UNTIL 1996. [NOTE: HER HUSBAND
IS ANTON BEBLER, AN IMPORTANT EMBASSY CONTACT, PRESIDENT OF
THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF SLOVENIA AND FORMER SLOVENIAN
AMBASSADOR TO THE UN IN GENEVA. END NOTE.] BEBLER WILL BE
FILLING JELKO KACIN'S SEAT.

-- SINISA GERMOVSEK IS A MEMBER OF SDS AND WILL BE REPLACING
MIHA BREJC.

-- MATJAZ FALKNER IS A MEMBER OF NEW SLOVENIA (NSI). HE
WILL BE TAKING LOJZE PETERLE'S SEAT.

15. (SBU) COMMENT: WITH NATIONAL ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR THE
FALL, ONE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT THE EVENTS CURRENTLY
UNFOLDING COULD BE ATTRIBUTED TO PRE-ELECTION POSITIONING.
THE GOVERNING COALITION WAS DEALT A LOSS IN THE RECENT
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REF D), AND THIS BLOW HAS
CONTRIBUTED TO THE OPPOSITION'S EFFORTS TO GARNER MORE
SUPPORT AHEAD OF THE FALL PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, WHILE THE
RULING COALITION WORKS TO SECURE ITS BASE.

16. (SBU) ALTHOUGH PAHOR WILL TAKE HIS SEAT IN THE EP LATER
THIS MONTH, HE HAS STATED THAT HE WILL ALSO RUN IN THE FALL
ELECTIONS. PAHOR IS A VERY POPULAR POLITICIAN AS EVIDENCED
BY HIS WINNING A SEAT IN THE EP, THROUGH PREFERENTIAL
VOTING, DESPITE BEING AT THE BOTTOM OF HIS PARTY'S LIST (REF
D). ACCORDING TO CONVENTIONAL WISDOM, WITHOUT PAHOR AS A
CANDIDATE, ZLSD WOULD MOST LIKELY NOT CROSS THE THRESHOLD
FOR A PLACE IN PARLIAMENT IN THE FALL ELECTIONS. ALTHOUGH
PAHOR HAS BEEN DISTANCING HIMSELF FROM HIS PARTY, POSSIBLY
PREPARING A BID FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN 2007, HIS PARTY
UNDERSTANDS THAT IT NEEDS HIM AND WILL, AT LEAST FOR NOW,
LIKELY IGNORE HIS ATTEMPTS TO REINVENT HIMSELF. IF ZLSD IS
ONCE AGAIN INVITED INTO THE GOVERNING COALITION AFTER THE
FALL ELECTIONS, PAHOR COULD HAVE A MINISTERIAL POSITION
OFFERED TO HIM. WE THINK HE FAVORS THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.
END COMMENT.

YOUNG

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